

Recommendations by the Accreditation Team and Report of the Accreditation Visit for Professional Preparation Programs at InterAmerican College

March 12, 2008

Overview of This Report

This agenda report includes the findings of the Accreditation Team visit conducted at InterAmerican College. The report of the team presents the findings based upon reading the Institutional Self-Study Reports, review of supporting documentation and interviews with representative constituencies. On the basis of the attached report, the accreditation recommendation is Accreditation.

Common Standards and Program Standard Decisions For all Programs offered by the Institution or Program Sponsor

Common Standards

	Standard Met	Standard Met with Concerns	Standard Not Met
1) Education Leadership	X		
2) Resources	X		
3) Faculty	X		
4) Evaluation	X		
5) Admission	X		
6) Advice and Assistance	X		
7) School Collaboration	X		
8) District Field Supervisors	X		

Program Standards

	Total # of Program Standards	Number of Program Standards		
		Standard Met	Standard Met with Concerns	Standard Not Met
Multiple Subject and Single Subject Multiple Subject and Single Subject BCLAD (Spanish)	19	19	0	0

The following was completed in accordance with the procedures approved by the Committee on Accreditation:

- Preparation for the Accreditation Visit
- Preparation of the Institutional Self-Study Report
- Selection and Composition of the Accreditation Team
- Intensive Evaluation of Program Data
- Preparation of the Accreditation Team Report

**California Commission on Teacher Credentialing
Committee on Accreditation
Accreditation Team Report**

Institution: InterAmerican College

Dates of Visit: March 9-12, 2008

Team Recommendation: Accreditation

Rationale:

The unanimous recommendation of Accreditation was based on a thorough review of the institutional self-study; additional supporting documents available during the visit; interviews with administrators, faculty, candidates, program completers, and local school personnel; along with additional information requested from program leadership during the visit. The team felt that it obtained sufficient and consistent information that led to a high degree of confidence in making overall and programmatic judgments about the professional education unit's operation. The decision pertaining to the accreditation status of the institution was based upon the following:

Common Standards –

The team found ample evidence through document review and interviews that all Common Standards were met and there was an example of an area of strength in Common Standard 6: Advice and Assistance.

Program Standards –

The team found ample evidence through document review and interviews that all Program Standards in the Multiple Subject/Single Subject and Multiple Subject BCLAD/Single Subject BCLAD were met.

Overall Recommendation –

Since all Common Standards and Program Standards were met, the team's unanimous recommendation is **Accreditation**.

Accreditation Recommendations

- (1) The Team recommends that, based on the attached Accreditation Team Report, the Committee on Accreditation make the following accreditation decision for InterAmerican College and all of its credential programs: **Accreditation**.
- (2) On the basis of this recommendation, the institution is authorized to recommend candidates for the following Credentials:

Multiple Subject Credential

Multiple Subject

Multiple Subject BCLAD (Spanish)

Single Credential

Single Subject

Single Subject BCLAD (Spanish)

Staff recommends that:

- The institution's response to the preconditions be accepted.
- InterAmerican College be permitted to propose new credential programs for approval by the Committee on Accreditation.
- InterAmerican College continue to make progress toward full WASC accreditation.
- InterAmerican College continue in its assigned cohort on the schedule of accreditation activities, subject to the continuation of the present schedule of accreditation activities by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing.

Accreditation Team

Team Leader:

Juan Flores

California State University, Stanislaus

Common Standards Cluster:

Gloria Guzman Johannessen

University of Redlands

Basic Credential Programs Cluster:

Peter Cheoros

Lynnwood Unified School District, Retired

Staff to the Accreditation Team

Jo Birdsell, Consultant

Documents Reviewed

College Catalog

Institutional Self Study

Course Syllabi

Candidate Files

Student Teaching Handbook

College Website

Program Completer Teaching Performance

Assessments

Part-Time Faculty Policies

Meeting Minutes

Supervisor Observation Notes

Schedule of Classes

Advisement Documents

Faculty Vitae

Program Completer Portfolios

College Budget Plan

Interviews Conducted

	Team Leader	Common Standards	Basic Credential Cluster	TOTAL
Program Faculty	3	3	5	11
Institutional Administration	2	1	4	7
Candidates	2	7	8	17
Program Completers	9	9	6	24
Employers of Graduates	1	2	2	5
Supervising Practitioners	1	1	3	5
Advisors	1	1	4	6
School Administrators	2	2	2	6
Credential Analysts and Staff	1	1	2	4
Advisory Committee	1	2	1	4
Board of Trustees Members	2	2	2	6
TOTAL				95

Note: In some cases, individuals were interviewed by more than one cluster (especially faculty) because of multiple roles. Thus, the number of interviews conducted exceeds the actual number of individuals interviewed.

Background information

InterAmerican College is a small higher education institution situated south of San Diego in National City. The institution partners with various area school districts, serving a diverse community. Their service area, National City, once identified as the 13th poorest city in the nation, is comprised largely of Spanish speaking immigrants. Area schools in National City and the South Bay have a high number of English learners and a high count of students receiving free or reduced lunches. The institution is a non-profit higher education institution seeking WASC accreditation and is governed by a board of trustees.

Education Unit

The College serves both degree seeking adults and a very small clientele of credential students pursuing the preliminary credential in multiple and single subject, most with BCLAD authorization. Most of the students at InterAmerican College are bilingual Spanish speaking adults. They include both US native born and foreign educated candidates. The US born students are primarily transfer students from community colleges. Many of the educated immigrants are from different Latin American countries requesting equivalency of their coursework from their home country in order to pursue teaching credentials. Other candidates are teacher aides in area schools.

Table 1
Program Review Status

Program Name	Program Level (Initial or Advanced)	Number of Candidates Enrolled or Admitted	Agency or Association Reviewing Programs
Multiple Subject Single Subject Multiple Subject BCLAD Single Subject BCLAD	Initial	9	CTC

The visit

The visit to InterAmerican College began on Sunday, March 9. The three team members and the Commission consultant met briefly at the hotel then drove to the institution for a reception and opportunity to meet faculty and cooperating teachers. Monday morning an overview of InterAmerican College and the Multiple Subject/Single Subject and Multiple Subject/Single Subject BCLAD programs was made. The team had opportunities for data collection including a thorough review of evidence in the document room. On Tuesday morning, the team leader presented the Mid-Visit Report. Team members were taken to two schools to see program completers, cooperating teachers and administrators. Team members met with a local school superintendent who is an employer of program completers. The team visited one of the credential course classes on Tuesday evening. The team met to discuss all standards and programs. Consensus was reached on all standard findings and an accreditation recommendation. The Exit Report was held on Wednesday, March 12, 2008.

Common Standards

Standard 1: Educational Leadership

Standard Met

The institution (faculty, dean/director and institutional administration) articulates and supports a vision for the preparation of professional educators. All professional preparation programs are organized, governed, and coordinated with the active involvement of credential program faculty. Institutional leadership fosters cohesiveness in management; delegates responsibility and authority appropriately; resolves each professional preparation program's administrative needs as promptly as feasible; and represents the interests of each program in the institution, the education profession, and the school community.

The Preliminary Credential program is based on a clearly-articulated vision. Teaching Performance Expectations and CTC Program standards serve as bases for program design. Central to the mission of the program is preparing knowledgeable, reflective educators to promote student success in multilingual, multiethnic, and multicultural school settings. The credential program is highly responsive to the needs of the public schools in the San Diego area.

The team determined that the credential program is organized, governed, and coordinated with the active involvement of program faculty, representatives from participating schools and other stakeholders. Many program aspects and components have been designed based on feedback and input from stakeholders.

There is a well-articulated unit leadership structure within InterAmerican College to effectively meet the needs and represent the interests of the credential program in a systematic and coordinated manner. There is strong evidence of clearly delineated roles and responsibilities to ensure effective governance.

The unit has a clearly-articulated credential recommendation process that ensures that candidates recommended for a credential have met all requirements.

Standard 2: Resources

Standard Met

Sufficient resources are consistently allocated for the effective operation of credential preparation program, to enable it to be effective in coordination, advising, curriculum, instruction, and field experiences. Library and media computer facilities, and support personnel, among others, are adequate.

InterAmerican College works collaboratively with surrounding districts, universities and community groups to identify potential future teachers and meet a wide range of educational needs.

InterAmerican College leadership is committed to providing sufficient funding for the credential programs to be successful. Program costs are paid through a combination of tuition and college funds. InterAmerican College has well-staffed facilities that include classrooms, technology training facilities, and offices for program instructors and staff. Resources are sufficient to effectively support all aspects of credential program coordination, admission, advisement, instruction, and clinical supervision. In addition, college staff is actively involved with the National City community and organize fundraising activities to support program candidates.

Standard 3: Faculty

Standard Met

Qualified persons are hired and assigned to teach all courses and supervise all field experiences in each credential preparation program. Faculty reflect and are knowledgeable about cultural, ethnic, and gender diversity. The institution provides support for faculty development, and recognizes and rewards outstanding teaching. The institution regularly evaluates the performance of course instructors and field supervisors, and retains in credential programs only those individuals who are consistently effective.

Interviews with candidates, program completers, program faculty and field supervisors, as well as a review of faculty vitae indicate that college administration and staff, coursework instructors, and field supervisors are well qualified. All program instructors have considerable K-12 experience, which informs their practice as instructors and supervisors and enables them to maintain collaborative relationships and active involvement in the broader professional community. Program instructors also have extensive knowledge of academic standards, frameworks, and accountability systems used in public schools and demonstrate their commitment to staying abreast of changes in these areas.

Program instructors reflect the language and cultural diversity of the schools in the InterAmerican College service area and demonstrate knowledge of linguistic, cultural, ethnic, and gender diversity. Candidates and program completers reported that coursework instructors were highly knowledgeable and skilled in providing strategies for addressing a wide range of instructional needs. Instructors consistently model the instructional strategies, practices, and perspectives they are teaching.

The institution regularly evaluates the performance of the course instructors and field supervisors and retains only those individuals who are consistently effective.

Standard 4: Evaluation

Standard Met

The institution regularly involves program participants, graduates, and local practitioners in a comprehensive evaluation of the quality of courses and field experiences, which leads to substantive improvements in each credential preparation program, as needed. Meaningful opportunities are provided for professional practitioners and diverse community members to become involved in program design, development and evaluation activities.

There is definite evidence of a formalized assessment system for evaluation and program improvement. The InterAmerican College Director of Institutional Research is responsible for gathering and maintaining data on the program. There is a wealth of data that includes educational experiences of the candidates, including experiences at the community college. The Director of Institutional Research gathers data from the credential programs for program assessment purposes.

There is a coherent unit system for regularly involving program participants, program completers and local practitioners in a comprehensive evaluation of the quality of courses, field experiences, and measures of candidate competency. This leads to substantive improvement in each credential program.

Standard 5: Admissions

Standard Met

In each professional preparation program, candidates are admitted on the basis of well defined admission criteria and procedures (including all Commission-adopted admission requirements) that utilize multiple measures. The admission of students from a diverse population is encouraged. The institution determines that candidates meet high academic standards, as evidenced by appropriate measures of academic achievement, and demonstrate strong potential for professional success in schools, as evidenced by appropriate measures of personal characteristics and prior experience.

Admission criteria and procedures for InterAmerican College credential programs are clearly defined and published in program recruitment materials. Candidates in each program are admitted on the basis of multiple measures including undergraduate GPA, passage of required prerequisite coursework, language assessment (both English and Spanish), demonstration of field experience, letters of recommendation and interviews with program faculty. Program information is disseminated through personal and profession referrals and on the InterAmerican College website.

Program faculty determine that candidates possess the personal characteristics and dispositions necessary to work effectively with diverse student populations by means of application letters, letters of recommendation, and interviews. Many of the credential program applicants currently work as para-educators in area schools. All program requirements must be met in order to be fully accepted into the program.

Standard 6: Advice and Assistance

Standard Met

Qualified members of the institution's staff are assigned and available to advise candidates about their academic, professional and personal development, as the need arises, and to assist in their professional placement. Adequate information is readily available to guide each candidate's attainment of all program and credential requirements. The institution assists candidates who need special assistance, and retains in each program only those candidates who are suited for entry or advancement in the education profession.

Candidates in the InterAmerican College credential program receive ongoing advisement throughout the program. Candidates and program completers consistently reported high levels of responsiveness from program staff to any questions or concerns raised by candidates. Program advisors are available before each class to provide advice and assistance to students on an as-needed basis. In addition, regular advisement sessions are provided to ensure that all candidates have information needed to complete all program requirements. Candidates whose progress or performance is deemed unsatisfactory are notified, and assistance is provided to enable them to succeed. Students may have to repeat assignments—or even entire courses—in order to demonstrate satisfactory performance.

Program information is made available to candidates through orientation sessions, handbooks, advisement meetings, and on the InterAmerican College website.

Areas of Strength in Standard Implementation

Candidates, program completers, field supervisors, and employers of program graduates uniformly identified advice and assistance as a program strength. InterAmerican College credential program faculty, advisors, and staff provide exceptional support to candidates who have questions or concerns, or who need other types of assistance.

Standard 7: School Collaboration

Standard Met

For each credential preparation program, the institution collaborates with local school personnel in selecting suitable school sites and effective clinical personnel for guiding candidates through a planned sequence of fieldwork/clinical experiences that is based on a well developed rationale.

Interviews with school administrators, field supervisors, district-employed supervisors, and program completers revealed a strong collaboration between InterAmerican College and the schools in the placement of teacher candidates. This collaboration is an important factor for the observed coherent and efficiently planned fieldwork activities. Suitable sites and effective clinical personnel are carefully selected using the network of professionals in the area, including some who completed their credentials at InterAmerican.

Standard 8: District Field Supervisors

Standard Met

Each district-employed field experience supervisor is carefully selected, trained in supervision, oriented to the supervisory role, and certified and experienced in either teaching the subject(s) of the class or performing the services authorized by the credential. District supervisors and supervisory activities are appropriately evaluated, recognized and rewarded by the institution.

Each district-employed field experience supervisor is carefully selected, trained in supervision, oriented to the supervisory role, and certified and experienced in either teaching the subject(s) of the class or performing the services authorized by the credential. District supervisors and supervisory activities are appropriately evaluated, recognized and rewarded by the institution.

The program has established high standards and expectations for district-employed supervisors and has a system in place, which assures that teacher candidates' placement is only with those cooperating teachers who meet these high standards.

The university supervisor has long standing relationships with district field supervisors in the surrounding areas. She meets with each of them individually to orient them to their role and train them in the supervisory responsibilities. District field supervisors are recognized and rewarded.

Multiple Subject/Single Subject Credential and Multiple Subject/Single Subject BCLAD Credential

Findings on Standards

After review of the institutional report, supporting documentation, completion of interviews with candidates, program completers, faculty, employers, and supervising practitioners, the team determined that all program standards are fully met.

The Multiple Subject/Single Subject, Multiple Subject BCLAD/Single Subject BCLAD curriculum is a clearly articulated rigorous program with expectations for high academic performance. Program completers and current candidates of the program state that the teacher preparation curriculum is meaningful, providing ample knowledge and skills to use in classroom teaching.

After reviewing documents and conducting interviews, the team determined that this program is highly regarded by candidates, faculty, cooperating teachers and employers. In fact, program completers expressed a high personal level of gratitude to faculty and staff for their support. Additionally, program completers consistently expressed that they were well prepared for their teaching roles and responsibilities.

Both the community and candidates are strongly supportive of the program, but worried about financial capacity of candidates. Program candidates and others requested that the program consider alternative ways to accomplish student teaching such as part time student teaching, internships, etc.

Areas of Strength in Program Implementation

Candidates and program completers consistently expressed appreciation for the availability, support and guidance provided to them. Program completers reported that the goals of the program were clearly articulated by their advisors who simplified the process, and these were key ingredients in their success. Candidates, program completers, faculty and cooperating teachers all commented on InterAmerican's open door policy and willingness to listen and assist them with their concerns.

Current candidates, program completers, employers, and cooperating teachers reported being very pleased with the quality, developmental nature, and variety of the fieldwork in the program.

Employer interviews disclosed a high level of satisfaction with the quality of the beginning teachers prepared by InterAmerican College.

There is evidence of consistent collection and analysis of data used to monitor individual candidate progress and assist them when needed. The administration also utilizes data to implement changes in the program as needed.

Candidates receive frequent visits, observation and opportunities to conference with field supervisors. Students are encouraged to take their methodology courses in conjunction with student teaching as a way of sharing experiences and strategies with instructors and their peers.